

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Joe Courtney (D-CT) and Congressman Charles W. Boustany, Jr., M.D. (R-LA) today sent a bipartisan letter to the House Budget Committee requesting full allocation of Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) receipts to remedy maintenance problems facing our nation's ports and harbors. Download the letter [here](#)

. The Congressmen also issued the following statements:

“As we have seen in towns like Clinton and Westbrook in my district, accessible, functioning waterways have immediate economic benefits to the communities around them,” **said Congressman Courtney.** “

Maintaining our harbors and ports is also critical to growing new markets at home and abroad for local businesses. In Connecticut today, more than \$100 million in dredging is necessary, according to the Army Corps of Engineers. This funding would help meet that need and ensure that our communities get the help they need to spur job growth and continue our economic recovery.”

“Our nation's ports and harbors function as gateways to domestic and international trade while supporting hundreds of thousands of American jobs,” **said Congressman Boustany.** “We cannot afford to threaten these avenues of commerce when they play such an important role in our nation's economy. From reducing economic competitiveness, to negatively impacting regional and national commerce, to increasing the number of unemployed American workers, failure to properly maintain our country's waterways hurts America in a variety of ways. In January 2012 alone, five ships ran aground in ports on the Lower Mississippi River while ports on the Great Lakes are seeing shipping seasons shortened due to a lack of properly directed maintenance funding.

“This nationwide issue transcends party lines as more than 180 Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle came together to voice their support for our nation's ports and harbors. I urge the House Budget Committee to address this problem in the FY 2013 budget by directing all annual user fees collected in the HMTF toward operations and maintenance of federally maintained ports and harbors.”

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